



Communi**que**

INS

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Removals

RECORD-SETTING ACHIEVEMENTS



Commissioner Commemorates

THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF 'GATEKEEPER'

Plans Unveiled for Expansion of Operation to El Centro Sector

Commissioner Meissner traveled to San Diego and Calexico, CA, in early October, leading the agency's local events commemorating the third anniversary of

Operation Gatekeeper and announcing the next phase of the operation, which includes an expansion eastward into the El Centro Sector.

"In just three years, INS has made the San Diego border harder to cross than at any time in recent history," the Commissioner said during her visit. "[Operation Gatekeeper] has substantially reduced border violence and improved the quality of life for residents of San Diego. Now we are embarking on the next phase of our multi-year strategy by bringing similar positive change to the border in eastern California."

According to the Commissioner, the third phase of Gatekeeper implementation will include the deployment of 133 new officers to California's Imperial Valley, including 62 Border Patrol agents, 40 Special Agents, 20 Immigration Inspectors, and 10 Detention officers. The new personnel resources have been assigned to El Centro for 60 days, Meissner said, with future resource needs to be determined as the build-up proceeds.

The expansion of Gatekeeper to the east is designed to combat an increase in illegal border crossing in the sector that has come with the success of Gatekeeper, which was initially focused on the 14 miles inland from the Pacific

Ocean. This area used to account for nearly 40 percent of all Border Patrol apprehensions nationwide, but that number has decreased significantly as enforcement efforts have moved migrations patterns to the more difficult terrain in the eastern part of the county.

In addition, the Commissioner pointed out, the Border Patrol will be setting up three around-the-clock checkpoints along major routes leading out of the region, including one each on state highways 86 and 111, to help disrupt alien smuggling operations. This will continue the Service's cooperation with the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Southern District of California, which has already filed felony charges against 320 suspected alien smugglers this year, compared with just 25 filings in the entire year before Gatekeeper was put into place.

Since the implementation of Gatekeeper, one of the keys to its success (see sidebar box) has been the agency's commitment to new resource and personnel infusions. There are now more than 2,200 agents in the San Diego sector alone, more than twice as many as were on the ground two years ago, the number of sensors in use has doubled to more than 1,000, and the number of scopes being used has more than tripled.

Operation Gatekeeper:

Proven Results

Among the successes achieved through the implementation and expansion of Operation Gatekeeper over the past three years are the following:

- Apprehensions have reached a 17-year low within the San Diego sector, with the number of illegal crossers dropping 48 percent;
- The crime rate in San Diego, and along the border, decreased by 30 percent between 1992 and 1996, nearly three times the national average;
- Drug seizures have shifted from along the border to the ports of entry, with over 60 percent of all such seizures now occurring at the region's POEs;
- Alien smuggling prosecutions have increased more than 10-fold, indicating that more illegal border crossers are resorting to such extreme methods. At the same time, smugglers have more than doubled, and in some cases tripled, their fees;
- The IDENT system has been used to capture more than 1.5 million sets of fingerprints, and has reduced the time spent to process each case on average by 30 minutes;
- A community relations unit has been created in sector and district offices;
- A Border Patrol toll-free line has been established to process comments and questions from the public; and
- Operation "Stay Out, Stay Alive" has been successfully used to alert the public about the dangers of crossing the border in remote areas.

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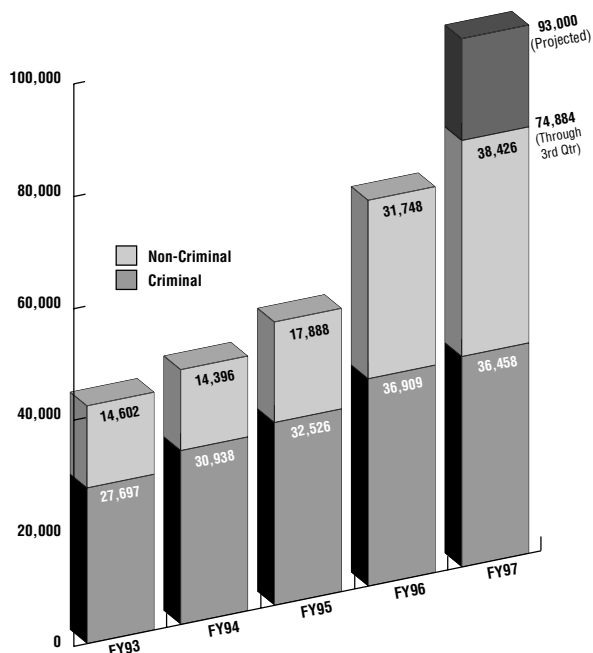
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Tagged and unloaded seized handguns are stored at INS' National Firearms Unit if they have archival or historical value. (See story on page 8).

Fiscal Year Alien Removals on Track to Reach Record Goal 1996 Total Reached by End of Third Quarter

INS removed more than 75,000 criminal and noncriminal aliens in the first nine months of the fiscal year at a record pace that will almost certainly allow the Service to reach its goal of 93,000 total removals for FY97 as defined at last year's Commissioner's Conference.

According to General Counsel David Martin who released the figures at INS



Headquarters on August 28, the number of removals in the first three quarters of the fiscal year—75,743—has already exceeded the total number for all of FY96 by more than 6,000. The third quarter, he said, also saw a new one-month record for the Service, with 10,976 illegal aliens removed from the country in May alone. In addition, 13,131 criminal aliens were removed in the third quarter, bringing the total number for the year to 36,916, a 37 percent increase over the same period last year.

"A key factor in the increased removal of criminal aliens," Martin said at a news conference where the numbers were announced, "is the improving performance of the Institutional Hearing Program (IHP)." Enhancements that began over the past two years are beginning to show results, he contended, with the total number of IHP removals up 40 percent from last year.

The number of noncriminal aliens the Service has removed was also up for both the quarter and the year, with 38,827 to date, a 64 percent increase compared to FY96. Some of this increase was likely due to the new expedited removal provisions of IIRIRA, Martin said, which is believed to have accounted for more than 10,000 removals since the law went into effect on April 1.

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Commissioner Names De La Viña as

NEXT HEAD OF BORDER PATROL

Kruhm to Retire at End of the Year; New Chief to be Stationed in S. California

Commissioner Doris Meissner named Gus De La Viña, currently the Service's Western Region director, as the new head of the U.S. Border Patrol on August 27, replacing Chief Doug Kruhm, who plans to retire at year's end after a 30-year INS career.



Gus De La Viña

In a change from the current organizational structure, when De La Viña takes command of the Patrol he will be stationed in Laguna Niguel,

CA, and not in Washington, DC. According to the Commissioner, locating De La Viña nearer to the Southwest border will allow him to keep in closer contact with the field to supervise, manage, and coordinate Patrol operations in a more hands-on manner than now possible.

For her part, Meissner stressed her support for De La Viña, pointing to his 27-year career with INS that has included positions as not only the Western Region director, but the chief patrol agent for the San Diego sector, chief patrol agent at the Border Patrol's Glyncro, GA, training facility, and deputy chief patrol agent of the El Paso sector.

"Gus brings [to the position] the experience and vision that we need in our expansion of the Border Patrol," she said in

making the announcement.

"The new leadership that this appointment will give us is important as we continue to increase the size, strength, and tactical complexity of the Border Patrol." The Patrol, which had just over 4,200 agents in FY94, grew to more than 6,900 agents by the end of FY97, with more new trainees on the way.

De La Viña also has the support of the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of California Alan Bersin, who called him, "a magnificent choice that will benefit all of us in the Southwest border region," and San Diego sector chief Johnny Williams, who called De La Viña "absolutely the right choice for this critical position."

New Pilot Projects to Help Ensure Only Legal Workers are Hired

At a Headquarters press briefing held September 17, INS Executive Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning Robert Bach and Acting Executive Associate Commissioner for Programs Paul Virtue outlined three new Service pilot projects mandated by IIRIRA that are being designed to help employers nationwide verify the status of their new hires.

The first system detailed is a basic pilot being designed to enable employers to verify the employment status of all new hires, regardless of their citizenship. First offered in five states with large illegal immigrant populations—California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois—the system was created with the help of the Social Security Administration (SSA) to allow employers to verify Social Security numbers

and alien identification numbers through SSA and INS databases.

INS' current Employment Verification Pilot (EVP) program provides the basis for the second new system, the *Citizen Attestation Pilot*, which enables employers to verify the employment eligibility of all new hires who state on their Form I-9 that they are noncitizens. The system will allow the employer, through the use of a personal computer and modem, to quickly and easily verify alien immigration numbers through INS databases once the employee is hired.

The third system, the *Machine-readable Document Pilot*, is identical to the basic pilot, except that it will allow employers to verify the number on the document of any alien presenting either a driver's license or identification card containing a machine-readable Social Security

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New Service Technology Initiatives Showcased on Capitol Hill

Illustrating how far INS has come in both developing and implementing new enforcement and benefits technologies, the Service held a special demonstration of a wide range of new initiatives in Washington, DC, in late September.

Service technologies showcased at the demonstration included:

- APIS, the Advance Passenger Information System, used by participating airlines and foreign governments to collect biographical data about passengers at the point of embarkation;
- The I-94 Automation System, a pilot program focusing on the electronic collection of arrival and departure information for non-U.S. citizens;
- INSPASS, the Service's automated validation system used to expedite the processing of authorized frequent travelers entering the United States;
- CLAIMS 4.0, the newest version of the Service's electronic system to manage naturalization applications; and
- IDENT, the rapidly growing system that allows INS to enter an apprehended alien's fingerprints into an electronic database that provides immediate information about past criminal and administrative violations.

Among the technology enhancements and accomplishments achieved in the past three years, it was noted that:

- At the start of FY95, the Service had just 35 long-range infrared scopes in use nationwide. Nearly 200 such scopes are now deployed, along with 204 sets of night-vision goggles and pocket scopes. Enhancements have also been made to three of the Service's

seven low-light remote video surveillance systems;

- In FY94, approximately 4,900 sensors were deployed nationwide. That number nearly doubled between FY95 and FY97, and as of June 1997 there were more than 9,500 sensors in place—8,000 of which are along the Southwest border;
- To date, INSPASS kiosks and enrollment systems, designed to facilitate the entry of frequent, low-risk international travelers, have been installed at four airports: Newark, NJ, International Airport; Lester B. Pearson International Airport in Toronto; John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York; and Miami International Airport. The system will be installed at Los Angeles International Airport and Washington, DC's, Dulles International Airport early next year; and
- CLAIMS 4.0 has been installed in Nebraska, with the Chicago district expected to be the first to be connected to the new infrastructure. It is anticipated that more than 90 percent of all naturalization applications will be processed by CLAIMS 4.0 by December 1998.

Commissioner Meissner briefly attended the demonstration, answering questions from the press and receiving a close-up view of SENTRI and the new pilot system that will enable INS (or trained and supervised contractors) to electronically scan all 10 fingerprints of both apprehended aliens and benefit applicants.

Stressing the need for integration in the systems being developed and implemented, the Commissioner said in a statement that while the

INS mission is extremely wide-ranging, there is one constant: that both those aliens on the enforcement side and those requesting benefits have unique biometric identifiers that the Service can use to manage their case histories. "Because the same set of facts must be known to make both enforcement and benefits decisions," she said, "the way to manage

The form is titled "Identix Live-scan Fingerprinting". It includes fields for "TYPE OR PRINT ALL INFORMATION IN BLACK", "LAST NAME FIRST NAME", "GOOD SAMPLE PRINTS", "DATE OF BIRTH", "PLACE OF BIRTH", "DATE OF ENTRY", "PLACE OF ENTRY", "DATE OF DEPARTURE", "PLACE OF DEPARTURE", "DATE OF ARRIVAL", "PLACE OF ARRIVAL", "DATE OF DEPARTURE", "PLACE OF DEPARTURE". It also has a section for "IDENTIFICATION OF OFFICIALS" with fields for "OFFICIAL NAME", "OFFICIAL TITLE", "OFFICIAL SIGNATURE", "OFFICIAL PHOTO", "OFFICIAL FINGERPRINTS". The bottom section is labeled "FINGERPRINTS" and contains a grid of 10 fingerprint images. The card is for "Identix Incorporated, Sunnyvale, CA 94086, 408/739-2000, FAX: 408/739-3308".

Prototype card for the Service's proposed electronic fingerprinting system.

the immigration system effectively is to integrate the entire set of information and make it available for all immigration functions." These technologies, both those currently in use as well as those in the pilot testing stages, she said, will help the Service reach this goal.

For copies of the complete INS report distributed at the showcase, "Technological Achievements: Improving the Way INS Does Business," contact Crystal Lloyd-Williams in the INS Library and Resource Center at Headquarters—425 I Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20536 or call (202) 514-2837.

SERVICE INSPECTORS TRAIN STAFF AND AIRLINES AT SOUTH PACIFIC MINI GAMES

Five INS Inspectors, including Jake Achterberg, assistant chief inspector at Headquarters, recently participated in what can only be called a

ument identification, trained Samoan Customs agents at the request of the U.S. Customs Service,

Games as an opportunity to make a political statement.

According to Achterberg, the success of the effort demonstrates the Service's continuing commitment to helping address immigration concerns throughout the world—not just in the United States—especially in smaller countries that may not have the experience or resources necessary to deal with large international influxes.

and trained personnel working for airlines that were bringing international athletes and visitors to the Games.

The island's governor and lieutenant governor were so pleased with the training that they have expressed interest in sending one of their airport inspectors to an INS training facility in the near future.

The main reason for INS assistance, Achterberg said, is that recent Service intelligence reports have indicated that smugglers from several Pacific countries, most often China, are using American Samoa as a way station for bringing illegal immigrants into the United States. "Once they get there, they can easily take a flight to Hawaii, and they're in the U.S.," he said. There was also a concern that terrorists in the region might use the

"dream detail," traveling to American Samoa from July 18 to August 13 to assist with training and oversight during the fifth South Pacific Mini Games in Pago Pago.

Traveling with Achterberg, and deputized by Samoa's attorney general to train INS officers and Mini Games staffers, were Inspectors Kenneth E. Bridges and Fernando C. Arevalo, both of the Honolulu, HI, district office; Veronica Sanchez of the Los Angeles district office; and Cindy S. Wong of the San Francisco district office. The five staffers conducted two weeks of formal training sessions for Samoan inspectors on fraudulent doc-



"With the attention now on Operation Global Reach," he said after returning, "this shows that INS is not waiting until people [attempt to enter] here. We are actively going to countries on request to stop inadmissible aliens from coming to the United States."

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card that includes their name and date of birth. Iowa is the only state that currently issues such machine-readable cards, and the pilot will, accordingly, initially be available there, and only to selected employers.

"This expanded verification effort is intended to help employers take the guesswork out of verifying new employees'

eligibility to work," Commissioner Meissner said in a statement when the pilots were announced. Since the EVP was established in October 1995, she noted, more than 1,100 employers have signed up to participate, with perhaps the strongest positive response coming from the nation's meat-packing and poultry processing industries.

New Management Manuals Unveiled at Commissioner's Conference

Looking for the INS policy on health benefits, rules for operating vehicles, alien entry registration, contracting restrictions, or Federal travel requirements?

Perhaps you want to check out the INS standards for preparing executive-level correspondence, setting up a briefing, or drafting congressional testimony.

These and dozens of other policies and procedures governing INS' day-to-day business can now be found in two manuals recently reengineered for easy access and use by all employees: the INS Administrative Manual and the INS Staff Action Manual: Correspondence, Style, Procedures, and Protocols. Both were unveiled at the Commissioner's Conference earlier this month in Albuquerque, NM.

The Administrative Manual is the agency's key reference guide for all official policies and procedures

affecting personnel, property, information communication, and financial matters. Originally comprising 14 large binders containing more than 8,000 pages, the manual has been carefully reformatted to place approximately 200 of the Service's most widely applicable policies and their accompanying procedures in a succinct, standardized format using three average-size binders.

The Staff Action Manual features standards for the agency's most frequently used internal and external communications vehicles, including guidelines for preparing, packaging, and sending letters and memoranda, as well as scheduling events, meeting protocols, and suggestions on drafting press releases, speeches, and testimony.

Rethinking and redesigning these manuals was the work of a team headed by Linda Greene of

the Office of Management. The team focused on analyzing the best practices of other agencies, developing standard formats and electronic templates, reformatting the policies and procedures, establishing the conventions for using and maintaining the manuals, getting them printed, and developing the complementary training modules. The project, which was completed in five months, was overseen by an executive steering group that represents key agency functions and that has the approval of INS' two labor unions.

In addition to being distributed in the hard-copy binders, CD-ROM versions of both manuals are included in the current issue of INSERTS. Servicewide training to ensure effective use of the Staff Action Manual will begin this month.

1996 INS Statistical Yearbook Now Available

The 1996 *Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service* has been released and is now available for distribution. The current edition presents data for 1996, along with related historical information. The major areas covered include: immigrants admitted for legal permanent residence; refugees approved and admitted; nonimmigrant admissions (e.g., tourists, students, etc.); aliens naturalized; and aliens apprehended and removed.

The statistics for 1996 reflect a rise in immigration to the United States; an all-time high in the number of tourists to the United States; and an increase in the number of deportable aliens apprehended.

Highlights for 1996 include:

- 915,900 persons were granted legal permanent resident status, 195,000 more than in 1995.
- 18 percent of all immigrants were born in Mexico; 34 percent were born in Asia.
- 74,791 refugees were admitted; 40 percent came from the republics of the former Soviet Union.
- 24.8 million temporary visitors were admitted, 9.7 percent more than in 1995.
- 77 percent of temporary visitors were tourists; 15 percent were visitors for business.
- 128,190 asylum applications were filed; over half from El Salvador.
- 1.045 million persons were naturalized, with 24 percent born in Mexico.
- 1.6 million persons were apprehended, 18 percent more than in 1995.

Immigration 101

The Operations of INS'

NATIONAL FIREARMS UNIT

Gary Runyon loves his door. You can tell by the way he stands in front of it smiling, challenging you to try to move it.

NFU Administrator Gary Runyon stands in front of the smaller of two steel vault doors used to secure weapons storage space at the facility.



So you step into the 4,000-square-foot vault, under the constant, watchful eye of surveillance cameras, and give the 8,000-pound solid steel door a push. And slowly it moves, revealing a storehouse of INS weapons.

Stopping it is another question. Like an oil tanker attempting to slow down in the open ocean, it takes your full weight to combat the door's inertia.

Runyon again smiles like a proud father as you begin understand how difficult it would be to break into his new firearms storage area.

As the administrator of INS' National Firearms Unit (NFU) in central Pennsylvania, Runyon, who is also an associate chief patrol agent in the Border Patrol, has a right to be proud. The vault, along with the entire NFU facility, is incredibly secure, and in the three years he has been in charge, not one of the 13,000 Service-owned, seized, or historical weapons stored at the unit at any one time has ever come close to falling into the wrong hands.

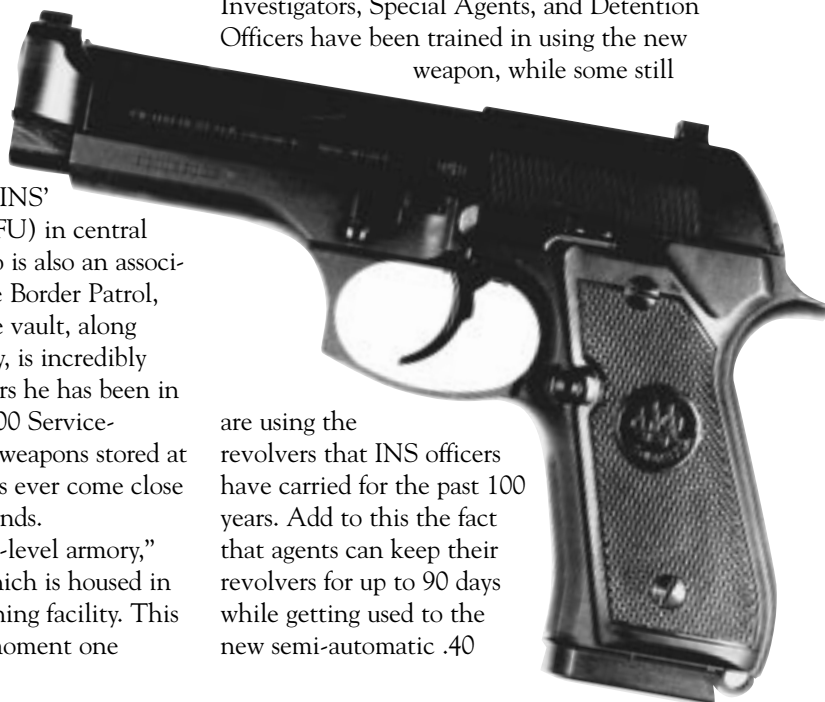
"We're basically a depot-level armory," Runyon says of the unit, which is housed in a former Navy Reserve training facility. This much is obvious from the moment one

drives through the razor-wire armed fences surrounding the NFU. Once inside, the scene is nearly overwhelming. Behind the unit's 8,000-pound door are stocks of Service firearms including rifles, handguns, and shotguns, as well as everything from pearl-handled revolvers seized in drug stings to a .22 the size of a walnut. Ammunition—cases and cases of it—is stored separately in its own secured area.

The NFU is much more than a warehouse for Service weapons not currently in the field, however. INS has over 50,000 firearms in inventory, and 27,000 in use at any one time, Runyon says, and it is the unit's responsibility to keep track of their location and make sure they are in excellent working condition.

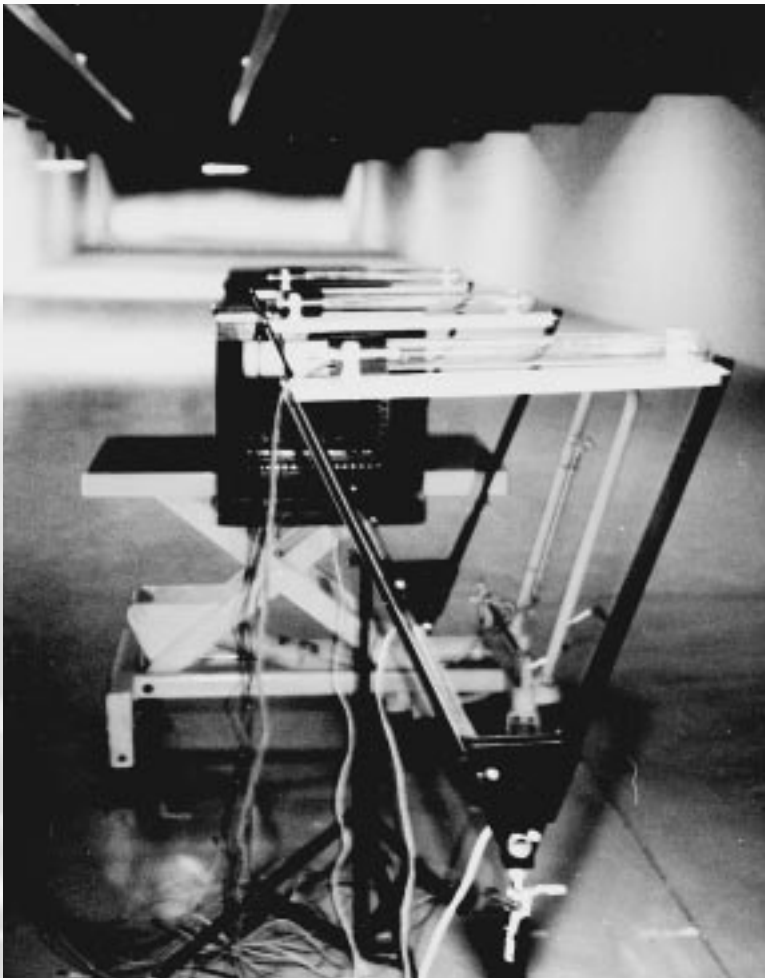
"Getting a handle on all of the weapons in the Service is our number one priority," he contends, which, even with today's computer technology, is harder to accomplish than it sounds. Part of the reason is that the Service is currently three-quarters of the way through a transition to a new handgun—the Beretta 96-D Brigadier—which was introduced at the Service's academies in October 1995 and in the field in June 1996.

So some Border Patrol agents, Investigators, Special Agents, and Detention Officers have been trained in using the new weapon, while some still



are using the revolvers that INS officers have carried for the past 100 years. Add to this the fact that agents can keep their revolvers for up to 90 days while getting used to the new semi-automatic .40

The new Service firearm.



Target boxes are used to reconstruct how a bullet might have passed through materials such as glass or drywall.

caliber firearm, and it adds up to a lot of weapons for the NFU to track.

At the same time, firearms in the field are aging and need to either be reworked or evaluated for possible replacement. This is a major component of the NFU's work. While the entire unit has only 18 employees (Runyon says he could use a staff twice that size), three "armorers" are kept busy full-time inspecting and repairing INS firearms sent to the NFU because they are not working properly. They are also responsible for servicing and rebuilding all of the Service's shotguns, as there is currently no

external contract to buy replacements. Any guns that are not repairable must be destroyed, and a comprehensive record is kept of this as well.

The NFU is responsible for securing and managing the shotgun contract, just as it did with the new Berettas and all Service ammunition. The Beretta order, which was placed only after a series of potential replacement firearms were evaluated, was the largest ever in the history of Federal law enforcement. In all, the Service placed orders for more than 18,000 new pistols, all of which were first sent to the NFU for log-

ging-in, inspection, and testing before going to the field. The unit also coordinated the development of the transition training modules for INS officers around the country who were switching to the Beretta, and has been responsible for monitoring all ongoing training for the Service's 800 certified firearms instructors.

In addition, the NFU tests all new Service ammunition, archives reference and historical weapons, conducts shooting incident investigation training (as a joint exercise with the Office of Internal Audit), is currently developing a field armorer training course for firearms instructors interested in learning how to conduct certain repairs, issues safety notices for the field, and tests potential new Service weapons, including a range of concealable handguns now being considered.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, Runyon's unit compiles and produces the Service's annual report of shooting incidents for each calendar year, which catalogs all firearms-related incidents that have occurred throughout the entire country, in all divisions of the Service.

"Our main goal," Runyon concludes in summarizing the operations of the NFU, "is to ensure that Service officers are able to survive violent, armed confrontations with the best equipment and policies there are."

"If you buy a piece of computer equipment that doesn't work," he says, "[there's a good possibility that] no one will get hurt. It's not the same with a firearm or ammunition."

"Getting a handle on all of the weapons in the Service is our number one priority."

INS National Firearms Unit Administrator Gary Runyon



The staff of the NFU contains three full-time armorers, including Robert Masters, who are responsible for servicing all weapons that come in from the field for repairs.

Service Hires First Employees

THROUGH 'WELFARE TO WORK' PROGRAM

On March 8, 1997, President Clinton directed all Federal agencies to develop programs to attract and hire welfare recipients. In response to this directive, INS' Central Region was requested by Headquarters to formulate a recruitment plan to meet this goal.

The Administrative Center-Dallas' (ACD) Human Resources Division accepted this challenge, and developed a plan to identify the steps needed to successfully develop a "Welfare to Work" program within the prescribed time frame. The responsibility for each step in the hiring process was then assigned to key personnel, including two staff members who were tasked with developing creative hiring techniques to attract qualified applicants, coordinating recruitment efforts, receiving applications, issuing selection lists, and main-

taining adequate inventories for future vacancies.

Once the hiring authorities were determined, a recruitment campaign began immediately. The Division enlisted the aid of INS employees; special emphasis coordinators; local, county, city, and State agencies; college/university placement coordinators; churches; civic charity organizations; and other Federal agencies.

As a result of these joint efforts, four former welfare recipients who had applied to the program were on INS rolls by August 4, with three others scheduled to be on board by the end of September. The hiring process was expedited due to the support of the Security Branch for ACD, which arranged for those selected to come into the office to complete their paperwork.

Once each of these employees is on board, the Division's next objective will be to develop their skills and abilities. To accomplish this, the original orientation program has been expanded to ensure a smooth transition into INS' workforce. The training will include an introduction to the mission of INS; a tour of the Dallas-Fort Worth airport; and a description of career opportunities and available benefits, probation and disciplinary information, professionalism standards, work place skills development, how to work effectively with supervisors; and more. Journey-level employees will serve as mentors during the training, which will be available to all new employees, not just those in the Welfare to Work program.

INS Team Members Graduate From BORTAC Basic Training

Twelve new team members of INS' Border Patrol Tactical Unit (BORTAC) graduated from BORTAC Basic Training Session XI on July 13 at Biggs Army Airfield, TX, the site of BORTAC headquarters.

The BORTAC course is one of the most arduous and demanding training programs in civilian law enforcement. The curriculum includes training in operations planning, land navigation, patrolling, tactical tracking, rappelling, close-quarter battle, riot control, defensive tactics, drownproofing, trau-

ma medicine, combat firearms, and air assault instruction.

Approximately 100 agents applied for the BORTAC XI basic training session. Following physical testing in compliance with the INS Special Response Team Policy, 40 prospective team members were selected. Of those 40, 38 reported to BORTAC headquarters and 12 graduated.

Chief Patrol Agent Carl L. McClafferty III, a graduate of BORTAC II (1984), was the featured guest speaker at the graduation. He rose through the ranks to become Commander of BORTAC and later served in the Tucson, AZ, sector as an assistant chief patrol agent, before becoming the CPA of the Detroit, MI, sector.

Formed in 1984, BORTAC is the national tactical unit of the U.S. Border Patrol. The unit was initially developed to combat disturbances at INS detention facilities, and has since evolved into a highly lauded rapid support unit responsible for conducting many specialized operations, both domestic and foreign.



BORTAC XI graduates pictured (l. to r.): Front row: Charles Anzalone, Robert D. Farina, Robert N. Garcia, Ruben Miranda, Thomas Molloy, Jose Hernandez, Hector Pabon, Back Row: Alfred Hollenbeck Jr., Martin Santiago, Armando Diaz, Stephen Lewis, and guest speaker Chief Patrol Agent Carl L. McClafferty III. Graduate David De La Rosa is not pictured.

Baltimore District Chosen as Site for Fingerprint Technology Test

INS' Baltimore, MD, district has been selected as the test site for a pilot project that began on October 1 to determine the suitability of electronic fingerprinting technology with respect to the current needs of the Service.

According to John Shallman, the district's public information officer, the heart of the new technology is the Identix Print 600, a system

that not only scans an applicant's 10 fingerprints, but also alerts the user if any are unreadable for Service purposes. The system will help INS meet a congressional mandate to move away from standard ink-and-paper fingerprinting processes to more modern methods that can be employed by specially trained contractors under INS supervision, he said.

The system was demonstrated on September 30 during a pilot program kick-off hosted by Baltimore INS Director Benedict J. Ferro and held at the district office. Once in place, the new program, he said, will enhance the security of the fingerprint process, while offering applicants more reliable service than ever before.

IJs Take Active Roles in Miami Naturalization Ceremonies

by Rick Kenney
Executive Office for Immigration Review

It is not unusual for a judge to preside over a naturalization ceremony. But in Miami, FL, on August 21, an immigration judge administered the oath of citizenship at such a ceremony for the first time ever, with another immigration judge repeating the role at a second ceremony on the same day.

The ceremonies took place at 9:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., respectively, in the Miami Beach Convention Center, with each welcoming about 3,000 new citizens representing as many as 89 different nationalities.

In the morning, Immigration Judge Neale S. Foster of the Immigration Court in the Krome North Service Processing Center administered the oath and Miami District Director Robert Wallis delivered a speech welcoming the new citizens. In the afternoon, Chief Immigration Judge Michael J. Creppy administered the oath and delivered welcoming remarks, having traveled from the Headquarters of the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) in Falls Church, VA, for the occasion. In addition, several other immigration judges from the Miami Immigration Courts were among the special guests in attendance at both ceremonies.

The participation of the immigration judges in the ceremonies was arranged through an agreement between the immigration courts

and the INS district office. As part of the agreement, other immigration judges will be available to preside over future ceremonies. At the national level, both EOIR and INS hope to encourage the practice in other districts.



Chief Immigration Judge Michael J. Creppy addresses candidates for citizenship at naturalization ceremony in Miami, FL, on August 21. Behind Judge Creppy on the dais are INS District Director Bob Wallis (center), other district officers, and several immigration judges who serve in the Miami area, along with the Immigration Court Administrator Michael Ringstad (far right).

"We're delighted to take an active role in these ceremonies," said Immigration Judge Denise Slavin, speaking on behalf of the 28 IJs who serve in the Miami area. "We're grateful to the INS district office for giving us this opportunity."

Airport Ambassador Program

LIFTS MORALE IN NEW YORK AREA

Dedicated to recognizing the good deeds of "employees who go beyond the scope of their particular mission," the Airport Ambassador Program awards those whose "kindness, generosity, and professionalism serve as an example to other employees,

both within and outside the airport community."

Managed under the direction of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the program helps boost morale among airport staff by offering monthly American Express gift checks, as well as other prizes, to employees who have been nominated either by a passenger or by their supervisor for going out of their way to be friendly and assisting travelers in need.

The most recent INS employee recognized through the program was Johnnie Gray, an Immigration Inspector at JFK International Airport who was said to "exemplify the goals and ideals of the program." This "dedicated public servant," her nomina-

tion read, "is always aware of the fact that passengers are tired, homesick, and confused as they arrive at an airport...and always greets people in a warm, affable manner, whether they are U.S. citizens or just plain travelers."

Other INS employees whose service was recognized through "Ambassador of the Month" awards include: SII Angel Medina, SII Thomas Spelman, II Paul Beiger, II Marc Rapp, and SII James Hayes, who was nominated for his work as a public liaison with the diplomatic community, as well as his coordination of "Project Child," which facilitates the entry of orphans from Northern Ireland into the United States.



Immigration Inspector Johnnie Gray

Service's Virgin Islands Programs Show Increasing Effectiveness

The enforcement programs coordinated by the Service's offices in St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. John U.S. Virgin Islands are experiencing a "renaissance of effectiveness and respect in the Caribbean," according to Acting Area Port Director Michael Cornelius.

Officers from Inspections, Investigations, and Deportation are geometrically expanding their limited resources, Cornelius says, by regularly participating in both Federal and local task forces. The use of such task forces has allowed the offices to more effectively combat alien smuggling, narcotics trafficking, and other organized criminal activities in the region, enhancing the reputation of the agency within the law enforcement community.

In addition, the Virgin Islands offices are using community outreach at the same time

via an unprecedented public awareness campaign that uses regular briefings, seminars, and meetings with congressional, gubernatorial, business, and community organizations. In conjunction with the educational forum, documentary guides and brochures to pertinent Caribbean immigration issues have been designed by the resident staff and were distributed throughout the local community.

Finally, the infrastructure of each of the offices is seen by the new management team as the nexus to increasing staff morale and productivity. Accordingly, major equipment updates are currently underway, including the completion of a total computer network, installation of ergonomic office furniture, along with increased staff input and participation in the modernization process.

In the Danger Zone: San Francisco Staffer Helps Monitor Elections in Bosnia

In a trip that took her far from the 'City by the Bay,' Dina Haynes, assistant district counsel with INS' Office of General Counsel in San Francisco, CA, traveled to Bosnia-Herzegovina for two-and-a-half weeks in September as part of an international team monitoring the country's most recent municipal elections—the first held since the end of the civil war that plagued the region throughout the 1990s.

As one of 100 Americans making up part of the nearly 3,000-member NATO-based monitoring team, Haynes has traveled to Bosnia before, helping a group of 150 volunteers in the city of Bajna Luka to monitor the voter registration process for the country's municipal elections in May and June of this year.

While September's municipal elections actually took place over only one or two days, the international team spent time in the country both before and after the ballots were cast to ensure that the process in place guaranteed an unbiased election and that voter fraud was not even an issue.

"I completely believe in the idea," Haynes said of election monitoring on request before she left. "After six years of following this war, I want to be there when the elections take place. I'm proud to be one of these volunteers, and I'm proud of the United States' participation."

Her INS position prepared her well for the experience, in that much of her pretrial case work involves examining documentation that people have submitted. "It's turned out to be very similar to what I am doing here," she said. "And my eye for fraudulent documents has served me well."

She also stressed that her supervisors in the San Francisco office have been

extremely positive regarding her participation in the program, and even the Attorney General has noted "how proud she is of the attorneys who have volunteered to support these efforts."

As for her next trip, the 30-year-old Haynes, who has spent time in Chad as a volunteer with the Peace Corp and has a background in human rights law, is interested in traveling to Cambodia, Angola, or Albania. "I have a desire to be where burgeoning democracies are forming," she concluded. "I can take care of myself [in dangerous areas], but I have no doubt the U.S. special forces will be there to protect me if necessary."

Dina Haynes, assistant district counsel with INS' office in San Francisco, CA, stands in front of an armored tank during her recent trip to Bosnia to help monitor the country's municipal elections.



Service's First FOIA Users/Training Conference

HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC

**Commissioner
Meissner:**

*"We must
be ready to
respond to
increasing
requests."*

Saying that "the freedom to get information from the government is clearly part of our [first Amendment] freedoms and crucial to a free and open government," INS Executive Associate Commissioner for Management George H. Bohlinger III welcomed more than 100 Service employees and private citizens to the first-ever Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Users/Training Conference in Washington, DC, in late September.

The attendees were also welcomed with remarks by Magda S. Ortiz, director of the FOIA/Privacy Act (PA) Branch at Headquarters, and Scott Hastings, director of the HQ Office of Files and Forms Management, who said that he has "never before seen the level of commitment from the Department of Justice [regarding FOIA issues] that I have in the past year."

Last year INS received more than 100,000 FOIA requests nationwide, Commissioner Meissner said in her welcoming remarks at the conference, with that number expected to top 134,000 this year. "That number will undoubtedly continue to grow, and we must be ready to respond," she told the attendees, which included employees from all three Service regions, as well as users from the private sector.

INS is committed, the Commissioner stressed, to supporting the Service's FOIA fulfillment requirements with

both the technology and resources necessary to "move aggressively forward in ensure that we are meeting the spirit of the [FOIA] Act," and cited two examples of electronic systems currently under development that will help the service do so.

The first of these programs, an "electronic reading room" available over the Internet, is expected to come online this month, allowing those seeking INS information to first look for it using their personal computers. The second, a casework processing system known as FIPS (the FOIA Information Processing System), will decrease the time needed to respond to public information requests, saving the agency money over the long run. It is expected that the FIPS system will be fully operational this month in the Washington, DC, area, with nationwide implementation due by mid-1998. Both systems, the Commissioner said, "are electronic from start to finish."

Of the conference as a whole, the Commissioner said, "Every occasion that we have to explain what [the FOIA

process] does is important. Being here gives me the opportunity to talk about the really important work INS is doing. The [public's] right to the information that the government possesses is the cornerstone to any open form of government."

Following the Commissioner's keynote speech, Richard Huff, director of the Office of Information and Privacy within the Department of Justice, summarized current initiatives developed by the Attorney General with regard to the FOIA process, discussed the specifics of FOIA-related policy statements issued by the Attorney General, as well as President Clinton, and examined issues relating to the implementation of the new Electronic FOIA Act (EFOIA) passed last year.

Other topics addressed at the two-day conference included INS' National Automated Immigration Lookout System, the FOIA/PA appeals process, how to facilitate the Service's overall FOIA/PA workflow process, and discretionary disclosure procedures.

Participants in INS' first FOIA users/training conference.



"Excellence in Education" Theme of 1997 Hispanic Heritage Month

Celebrating the theme of "Excellence in Education: Building Opportunities for the Youth," INS commemorated Hispanic Heritage Month with a special Headquarters ceremony on September 17.

D. Diane Weaver, acting director of the Service's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, opened the ceremony by remarking how wonderful it is that we enjoy "the freedom to embrace our country's rich cultural heritage." She then introduced Commissioner Meissner, who spoke of the Service's commitment to diversity and the expanding role of Hispanic-Americans in all capacities within INS.

The Department of Justice has one of the highest levels of Hispanic employment within the federal government, and the Commissioner said that fully 25 percent of the total INS workforce is of Hispanic

heritage. The number has grown steadily, she said, from 5,000 in 1995 to over 6,600 today. This commitment also extends to the training and development of Hispanics in leadership roles within the Service, she concluded, with Hispanics comprising one-fourth of the enrollees in the Executive Potential Program and nearly that many in the New Leader Training Program.

The ceremony's featured speaker was first-term congressman Silvestre Reyes (D-TX), a former chief of both the McAllen and El Paso Border Patrol sectors, who was making his first official return to his INS roots. He was also an assistant regional commissioner in Dallas before being elected to Congress in 1994.

Citing the importance of strong educational opportunities within

the Hispanic community, Reyes said that INS should remember a phrase that he has used over the years as part of an anti-drug program he implemented in South Texas while with INS: "Our Children, Our Future, Our Responsibility."

"If we want to make a difference [in the lives of our children]," he said, "education must be a focus."



Special cultural entertainment at the Service's 1997 Hispanic Heritage Month celebration was provided by the musical group Conjunto Ecos de Borinquen.

INS Procurement Staffers Receive Highest Scores on Nationwide Exam



Gregory Q. Williams



Lisa Diernisse

Gregory Q. Williams, CPCM, SAS, an analyst on the staff of the Headquarters Procurement Division, has received highest score nationwide on the Simplified Acquisition Specialist (SAS) credential exam. The three-hour written exam is sponsored by the National Contract Management Association (NCMA), the professional association for procurement and contracting professionals, and is designed to test practical knowledge of the simplified acquisition process authorized by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). Thirty-eight percent of the candidates taking the May 1997 exam passed and received the NCMA's Simplified Acquisition Specialist credential.

In addition, **Lisa Diernisse**, CPSM, of the Headquarters Procurement Division, passed the Certified Professional Contracts

(CPSM) exam with the highest score nationwide. Of the 100 applicants who took the exam this year, roughly 60 percent passed. Potential applicants are required to meet several contracting/acquisition qualifications before they can take the exam.

The Simplified Acquisition Specialist credential is the newest offered by the NCMA. The NCMA also offers two other certification programs for members of the procurement and contracting profession: the CPSM, which recognizes individuals who have attained a very high level of education, experience, and training in the procurement and contracting profession; and the Certified Associate Contracts Manager (CACM) program, which recognizes mastery of the fundamentals of government contracting.

P e o p l e o n t h e M o v e

At Headquarters:

Julie H. Anbender has been appointed by the Commissioner as INS director of public affairs. Anbender has over 10 years of experience in the communications field, most recently working with the Service from March to August 1995 as acting director of communications while on detail



Julie H. Anbender

from the Department of Justice. She had previously worked as the deputy director of the Department's Office of Public Affairs, from 1993 to 1995, coordinating media activities with the White House and other Federal agencies. From 1991 to 1993, she was the press secretary to Florida governor Lawton Chiles. Anbender replaces Joseph Mancias Jr, who left INS on November 23 to begin an Intergovernmental Personnel Act detail as director of strategic planning and development for the National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives.

In the Field:

Christine G. Davis, formerly the officer in



Christine G. Davis

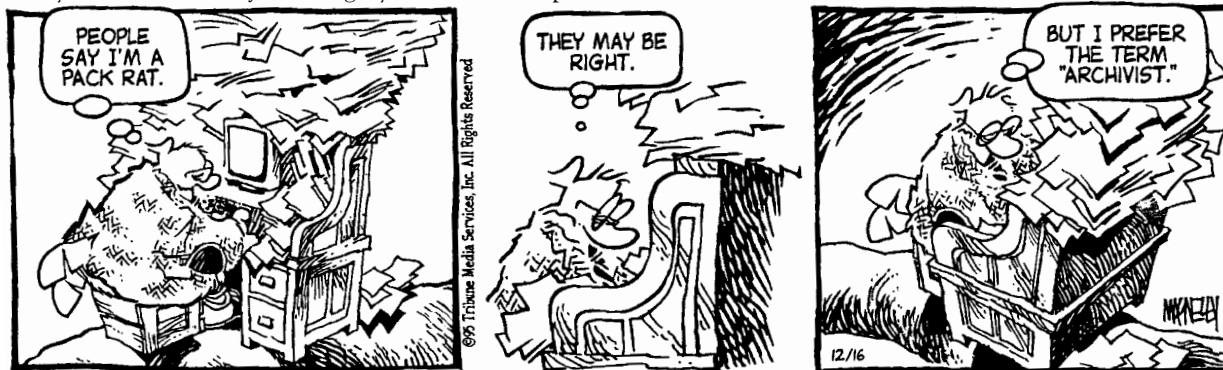
charge in Las Vegas, NV, has been selected as the new deputy district director in Chicago, IL. Prior to becoming Las Vegas OIC in 1995, Davis was the OIC in El Paso, TX, and before that served as chief of Enforcement at the Advanced Training Academy in Artesia, NM. She was also previously

assistant director for Detention and Deportation in the Western Region, as well as a staging facility manager in the San Diego sector, and a member of the Inspections staff in San Juan, PR.

Also in the Chicago district, Supervisory Special Agent **David Fermaint** was one of 12 recipients of 1997 Law Enforcement Awards presented at the Combine Law Enforcement Hispanic Heritage Committee's Fourth Annual Hispanic Heritage Awards Ceremony on September 24. A nine-year INS veteran, Fermaint is currently in charge of the district's anti-smuggling operations.

Welcome to the File Drawer, Your Records Information Corner.

INS deals with records, from e-mails, to paper files. Check back for new features. Use your Uniform Subject Filing System to clean up administrative and office files.



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Closed files should be destroyed in accordance with INS disposition schedules. Refer to last month's insert on Records Management from the National Records Training Program.

Communique

The **INS Communique** is published by the Headquarters Office of Public Affairs to inform employees of the Immigration and Naturalization Service about official and unofficial activities. Readers are invited to submit articles, photographs, and letters to the editor. Write to INS Public Affairs, Washington, DC 20536; or ☎ (202) 514-2648.

News updates are posted on the INS NEWSLINE at: ☎ (202) 616-1994. This newsletter and other useful information are available also on the Internet through the INS web site at <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov>.

Doris Meissner
Commissioner

Julie Anbender
Director of Public Affairs

Mitch Katz
Editor

Cover: INS removals in Harlingen and Port Isabel, Texas—summer 1997.